

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the Office Action of August 3, 2005 is respectfully requested.

Accompanying this Office Action is a one month extension of time and requisite fee.

In the Office Action claims 10 to 13 were noted as being considered to contain allowable subject matter. In the present amendment the subject matter of claim 10 has been included in claim 9 rendering claim 9 in condition for allowance. In addition, claims 11 and 13 have been rewritten in independent format and appropriate dependency changes have been made.

In the Office Action claims 1, 2, 7-9, 16-18 and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being considered anticipated by Palmer ('411), and claims 14, 15 and 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 based on Palmer in view of Willden et al.. For the reasons set out below, it is respectfully submitted that all pending claims stand in condition for allowance.

A review of Palmer reveals that its object is to provide an integrated "fiber layer/foam core/fiber layer" sandwich structure by high density stitching that passes through each of the three components in the sandwich structure. That is, Palmer specifically employs an intermediate foam core to gain the perceived benefit described in Palmer of a high strength composite when all three layers are stitched through in high density.

A review of the claim 1 invention reveals a different composite construction wherein stitching is limited to regions of cover-to-skin contact which excludes cover-stiffener-skin regions.

The claimed invention thus provides for a variety of benefits including stitch alignment of the stiffeners and a more universal system that can utilize a wide variety of materials whether they be of a type that can be readily stitched through or not.

In view of this, it is respectfully submitted that claim 1 and its dependents stand in condition for allowance.

Independent claim 16 has been canceled in this Amendment and thus is no longer at issue.

New independent claim 21 and its dependents 22 to 25 are directed at the above described benefits of the present invention (e.g., facilitation of alignment of stiffeners via stitch lines and also providing for the option of a wide variety of choices for the stiffeners). As seen claim 21 describes stitch pairs associated with respective stiffeners (an example of which is seen

in the described composite structure shown in Figs. 8 and 9 and described on page 6 of the application with longitudinally extending stitching 9 shown to opposite sides of stiffener 3). The stitch line associated with the left side edge is the closest stitch line to the left of the right stitch line. As described above this arrangement of claim 21 provides for the option of a wide variety of stiffeners including non-metal and metal stiffeners with the latter being a material that is ill-suited for stitching through. The claim 21 arrangement also provides for rapid assembly as the stitch lines can provide a positioning or alignment function for the stiffeners.

The additional dependent claims 26 to 31 are similar to earlier presented dependent claims with the base claim dependency revised.

All new and amended claims are respectfully submitted to be both allowable over the prior art and fully in accordance with 35 U.S.C. 112 first and second paragraphs.


In view of the above remarks, Applicants submit that the rejections are overcome. Hence, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

If any fees are due in connection with the filing of this Amendment, such as fees under 37 C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.17, please charge the fees to Deposit Account 02-4300; Order No. 032405R095.1.

Respectfully submitted,

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